THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) to (c) So far as IRS (IT) is concerned, 49 officers have taken voluntary retirement during 2006-07 and till 1st May, 2007. Requests from 5 officers for voluntary retirement are also under process.

So far as IRS (C&CE) is concerned, 38 officers have taken voluntary retirement during 2006-07 and till 1st May, 2007. Requests from 3 officers for voluntary retirement are also under process.

(d) The reason behind these retirements is largely personal.

(e) Under Govt. of India CCS (Pension) Rules, an officer is entitled to seek voluntary retirement.

Misuse of Pan Cards

†4337. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of persons have obtained more than one PAN Cards in the country and they are misusing them;

(b) if so, the number of persons who have more than one PAN Cards in the country;

(c) the number of persons who have returned such cards voluntarily;

(d) whether Government are taking action against those persons who have more than one PAN Card so that their possible misuse can be checked; and

(e) is so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) Yes, Sir. A few cases of misuse of duplicate PAN card have been reported.

(b) The number of persons having duplicate PANs is 13.1 lakhs as on 31.3.2007.

(c) The information relating to surrender of PANs voluntarily is not mainiained separetely in the date base. However, the number of duplicate PANs deleted as a result of the duplication exercise as on 11.5.2007 is 8,49,293.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(d) and (e) Several persons were allotted more than one PAN, particularly, during the period between 1996 and 2003 becase of—

(i) incorrect data entry;

(ii) multiple applications by the same person with varying particulars;

(iii) allotment both on the basis of PAN application and the return of income.

In such cases, generally no action is warranted against persons who are having more than one PAN card. However, in cases where misuse of the duplicate PAN card is reported, the Department has initiated proceedings for the imposition of penalty. Simultaneously, the Investigation wing of the Department is also carrying out enquiries, so as to ascertain the possibility of tax-evasion on the part of such persons.

Some cases where misuse of PAN cards have been reported in the last one year are:

(i) In February, 2007, a case of the same persons obtaining two PANs in different names and using them to apply for separte Import license was reported by the office of the Director General of Foreign Trade (DGFT).

(ii) In March, 2007, information was received from the Police Authorities regarding one person having two PANs in different names.

(iii) The Times of India, dated 16th March, 2007, carried a news item of detection of 138 PAN cards of different persons of multiple identities by the Delhi Police. Such PANs were used to create fake identities with the intention of defrauding banks. The Department has obtained information from the Police authorities and further investigation are in progress.

Increase in rate of service tax charges

4338. SHRI DARA SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are increasing the rate of Service Tax charges continuously causing great hardship to common man;